

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An apparatus operable to convert wavelengths of a plurality of optical signals, the apparatus comprising:

5 a coupler operable to receive a pump signal and a plurality of input signals each input signal comprising at least one wavelength different than the wavelengths of others of the plurality of input optical signals;

10 an optical medium operable to receive the pump signal and the plurality of input signals from the coupler, wherein the pump signal and each of the plurality of input signals are synchronized to overlap at least partially during at least a part of the time spent traversing the optical medium to facilitate generation of a plurality of converted wavelength signals each
15 comprising a wavelength that is different than the wavelengths of at least some of the plurality of input signals;

20 wherein a cross-talk between the converted wavelength signals comprises less than minus fourteen decibels (-14 dB) over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers or wherein a polarization sensitivity of the converter is less than 1.2 decibels over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

25 2. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the coupler comprises a wavelength division multiplexer.

3. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the optical medium is coupled directly to the coupler.

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4. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the plurality of input signals comprise signals in a first band of wavelengths and wherein the plurality of converted wavelength signals comprise signals in a second band of
5 wavelengths.

5. The apparatus of Claim 4, wherein the first band comprises the conventional band (C-band) of wavelengths and wherein the second band comprises either
10 the short band (S-band) or the long band (L-band) of wavelengths.

6. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein a wavelength of the pump signal resides spectrally between wavelengths
15 of at least some of the plurality of input signals and wavelengths of at least some of the plurality of converted wavelength signals.

7. The apparatus of Claim 6, wherein the spectrum
20 of the plurality of converted wavelength signals comprises an approximate mirror image of the spectrum of the plurality of input signals.

8. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the optical
25 medium comprises a medium operable to facilitate a Chi-3 or an effective Chi-3 nonlinear effect resulting in generation of the converted wavelength signals comprising instances of the optical input signals reflected about a wavelength of the pump signal.

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9. The apparatus of Claim 8, wherein the Chi-3 or effective Chi-3 nonlinear effect comprises parametric amplification, modulation instability, or four wave mixing.

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10. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length selected to result in a conversion efficiency of at least 4.7 decibels and a cross talk of -27 decibels or less in the converted wavelength signals over a wavelength range of at least 30 nanometers.

11. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the optical medium comprises a first end and a second end, and wherein the coupler comprises a polarization beam splitter coupled between the first end and the second end of the optical medium, the polarization beam splitter operable to communicate portions of received signals having a first polarization in one direction through the optical medium and to communicate portions of the received signals having a second polarization in a second direction through the optical medium.

12. The apparatus of Claim ¹¹ (1), wherein the optical medium facilitates generation of the plurality of converted wavelength signals through at least substantially unidirectional interaction between portions of the pump signal and input signals having the first polarization and at least substantially unidirectional interaction between portions of the pump signal and input signals having the second polarization.

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13. The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the polarization sensitivity comprises 0.6 decibels or less over a wavelength range of at least 35 nanometers.

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14. A multiple wavelength converter, comprising:

a coupler operable to receive a pump signal and a plurality of input optical signals each having at least one wavelength distinct from wavelengths of others of the plurality of input optical signals;

a nonlinear optical medium operable to facilitate interaction between the pump signal and the plurality of input optical signals to generate a plurality of converted wavelength optical signals each comprising a wavelength different than at least some of the wavelengths of the plurality of input optical signals;

wherein the nonlinear optical medium comprises a propagation length selected to result in conversion efficiency of at least minus sixteen decibels (-16 dB) and a cross-talk associated with the converted wavelength optical signals of minus fourteen decibels (-14 dB) or less and a over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

15. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 14, wherein the coupler comprises a wavelength division multiplexer.

16. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 14, wherein the plurality of input signals comprise signals in a first band of wavelengths and wherein the plurality of converted wavelength signals comprise signals in a second band of wavelengths.

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17. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 16,
wherein the first band comprises the conventional band
(C-band) of wavelengths and wherein the second band
comprises either the short band (S-band) or the long band
5 (L-band) of wavelengths.

18. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 14,
wherein the optical medium comprises a medium operable to
facilitate a Chi-3 or effective Chi-3 nonlinear effect
10 resulting in generation of the converted wavelength
signals comprising instances of the optical input signals
reflected about a wavelength of the pump signal.

19. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 18,
15 wherein the Chi-3 or effective Chi-3 nonlinear effect
comprises parametric amplification, modulation
instability, or four wave mixing.

20. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 14,
20 wherein the optical medium comprises a first end and a
second end, and wherein the coupler comprises a
polarization beam splitter coupled between the first end
and the second end of the optical medium, the
polarization beam splitter operable to communicate
25 portions of received signals having a first polarization
in one direction through the optical medium and to
communicate portions of the received signals having a
second polarization in a second direction through the
optical medium.

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21. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 14,
wherein the optical medium facilitates generation of the
plurality of converted wavelength signals through at
least substantially unidirectional interaction between
5 portions of the pump signal and input signals having the
first polarization and at least substantially
unidirectional interaction between portions of the pump
signal and input signals having the second polarization.

10 22. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 14,
wherein the conversion efficiency comprises at least 4.7
decibels and wherein the cross-talk comprises less than
minus twenty-seven decibels (-27 dB) over a wavelength
range of at least thirty (30) nanometers.

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23. A multiple wavelength converter, comprising:

a polarization beam splitter operable to receive a plurality of input optical signals and to communicate a first portion of each of the plurality of input optical signals comprising a first polarization in one direction, and to communicate a second portion of each of the plurality of input optical signals comprising a second polarization in a second direction;

an optical medium operable to propagate a first pump
10 signal comprising approximately the first polarization
and the first portions of the input signals in a first
direction, and to propagate a second pump signal
comprising approximately the second polarization and the
second portions of the input signals in a second
15 direction;

wherein the optical medium facilitates at least substantially unidirectional interaction between the first portions of the input signals and the first pump signal and between the second portions of the input signals and the second pump signal to generate first portions and second portions of a plurality of converted wavelength signals; and

wherein the polarization beam splitter is operable to receive and combine the first and second portions of the plurality of converted wavelength signals to form a plurality of converted wavelength signals.

24. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23,
wherein the plurality of input signals comprise signals
30 in a first band of wavelengths and wherein the plurality
of converted wavelength signals comprise signals in a
second band of wavelengths.

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25. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23,
wherein a wavelength of the pump signal resides
spectrally between wavelengths of at least some of the
plurality of input signals and wavelengths of at least
5 some of the plurality of converted wavelength signals.

26. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23,
wherein the optical medium comprises a medium operable to
facilitate a Chi-3 or effective Chi-3 nonlinear effect
10 resulting in generation of the converted wavelength
signals comprising instances of the optical input signals
reflected about a wavelength of the pump signal.

27. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 26,
15 wherein the Chi-3 or effective Chi-3 nonlinear effect
comprises parametric amplification, modulation
instability, or four wave mixing.

28. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23,
20 wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length
selected to result in a cross talk of less than minus
fourteen (-14) decibels over a wavelength range of at
least seven (7) nanometers.

29. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23,
25 wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length
selected to result in a cross talk of less than minus
twenty-seven (-27) decibels over a wavelength range of at
least thirty (30) nanometers.

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30. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23, wherein the optical medium comprises a polarization maintaining fiber.

5 31. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23, further comprising a polarization controller coupled to the optical medium and operable to facilitate directing at least substantially all of the converted wavelength signals from a single output port of the polarization
10 beam splitter.

32. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 31, wherein the single output port comprises the input port that receives the plurality of input optical signals, and
15 further comprising a circulator operable to direct the converted wavelength signals from the path of the input optical signals.

33. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23,
20 wherein the first pump signal and the second pump signal comprise approximately orthogonally polarized portions separated from a pump signal generated by a single pump source.

25 34. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23, wherein the first pump signal and the second pump signal comprise pump signals generated at separate pump sources.

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35. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23,
further comprising a first optical coupler and a second
optical coupler each residing between the polarization
beam splitter and an end of the optical medium, wherein
5 each optical coupler is operable to introduce one of the
pump signals to the optical medium.

36. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23,
wherein a polarization sensitivity of the converter
10 comprises less than 1.2 decibels over a wavelength range
of at least 7 nanometers.

37. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 23,
wherein a polarization sensitivity of the converter
15 comprises 0.6 decibels or less over a wavelength range of
at least 35 nanometers.

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38. A multiple wavelength converter, comprising:
an optical medium comprising:

a first end operable to receive from a polarization beam splitter first portions of a plurality of input optical signals and a first pump signal, each of the first portions and the first pump signal comprising at least substantially a first polarization; and

a second end operable to receive second portions of the plurality of input optical signals and a second pump signal, the second portions and the second pump signal comprising at least substantially a second polarization approximately orthogonal to the first polarization;

wherein the optical gain medium is operable to facilitate at least substantially unidirectional interaction between the first portions and the first pump signal to generate first portions of a plurality of converted wavelength signals, and to facilitate at least substantially unidirectional interaction between the second portions and the second pump signal to generate second portions of the plurality of converted wavelength signals, wherein the first and second portions of the plurality of converted wavelength signals are operable to be combined by the polarization beam splitter to form a plurality of converted wavelength signals.

39. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 38, wherein the plurality of input signals comprise signals in a first band of wavelengths and wherein the plurality of converted wavelength signals comprise signals in a second band of wavelengths.

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40. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 38,
wherein the optical medium comprises a medium operable to
facilitate a Chi-3 or effective Chi-3 nonlinear effect
resulting in generation of the converted wavelength
5 signals comprising instances of the optical input signals
reflected about a wavelength of the pump signal.

41. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 38,
wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length
10 selected to result in a cross talk of less than minus
fourteen (-14) decibels over a wavelength range of at
least seven (7) nanometers.

42. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 38,
15 wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length
selected to result in a cross talk of less than minus
twenty-seven (-27) decibels over a wavelength range of at
least thirty nanometers.

43. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 38,
20 wherein the optical medium comprises a polarization
maintaining fiber.

44. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 38,
25 further comprising a polarization controller coupled to
the optical medium and operable to facilitate directing
at least substantially all of the converted wavelength
signals from a single output port of the polarization
beam splitter.

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45. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 44,
wherein the single output port comprises the input port
that receives the plurality of input optical signals, and
further comprising a circulator operable to direct the
5 converted wavelength signals from the path of the input
optical signals.

46. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 38,
wherein the first pump signal and the second pump signal
10 comprise approximately orthogonally polarized portions
separated from a pump signal generated by a single pump
source.

47. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 38,
15 further comprising a first optical coupler and a second
optical coupler each residing between the polarization
beam splitter and an end of the optical medium, wherein
each optical coupler is operable to introduce one of the
pump signals to the optical medium.

48. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 38,
wherein a polarization sensitivity of the converter
comprises less than 1.2 decibels over a wavelength range
of at least 7 nanometers.

49. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 38,
wherein a polarization sensitivity of the converter
comprises 0.6 decibels or less over a wavelength range of
at least 35 nanometers.

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50. The multiple wavelength converter of Claim 38, wherein the polarization beam splitter comprises:

a first port operable to receive the pump signal and a plurality of input optical signals;

5 a second port operable to communicate toward the first end of the optical medium the first portions of the pump signal and the plurality of input optical signals, and to receive from the second end of the optical medium the second portions of the plurality of converted
10 wavelength optical signals;

a third port operable to communicate toward the second end of the optical medium the second portions of the pump signal and the plurality of input optical signals, and to receive from the first end of the optical
15 medium the first portions of the plurality of converted wavelength optical signals; and

a fourth port operable to communicate the plurality of converted wavelength optical signals.

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51. A system operable to generate a plurality of optical signals each having at least one distinct wavelength, the system comprising:

5 a plurality of optical transmitters each operable to generate one of a plurality of optical input signals each comprising a wavelength in a first subset of wavelengths; and

10 a multiple wavelength converter coupled to the plurality of optical transmitters and operable to approximately simultaneously generate, for each of the plurality of optical input signals, a converted wavelength signal comprising a wavelength in a second subset of wavelengths;

15 wherein a cross-talk between the converted wavelength signals comprises less than minus fourteen decibels (-14 dB) over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers or wherein a polarization sensitivity of the converter is less than 1.2 decibels over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

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52. The system of Claim 51, wherein the first subset of wavelengths resides within a first communications band and wherein the second subset of wavelengths resides within a second communications band.

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53. The system of Claim 52, wherein the first communications band comprises the conventional band (C-band) of wavelengths and wherein the second communications band comprises either the short band (S-band) or the long band (L-band) of wavelengths.

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54. The system of Claim 51, wherein the multiple wavelength converter comprises an optical medium operable to receive a pump signal and the plurality of input signals, wherein the pump signal and each of the plurality of input signals are synchronized to overlap at least partially during at least a part of the time spent traversing the optical medium to facilitate generation of the plurality of converted wavelength signals.

55. The system of Claim 54, wherein the optical medium comprises a medium operable to facilitate a Chi-3 or effective Chi-3 nonlinear effect resulting in generation of the converted wavelength signals comprising instances of the optical input signals reflected about a wavelength of the pump signal.

56. The system of Claim 54, wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length selected to result in a cross talk of minus twenty-seven (-27) decibels or less in the converted wavelength signals over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

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57. The system of Claim 51, wherein the multiple wavelength converter comprises an optical medium comprising:

5 a first end operable to receive from a polarization beam splitter first portions of a plurality of input optical signals and a first pump signal, each of the first portions and the first pump signal comprising at least substantially a first polarization; and

10 a second end operable to receive second portions of the plurality of input optical signals and a second pump signal, the second portions and the second pump signal comprising at least substantially a second polarization approximately orthogonal to the first polarization;

15 wherein the optical gain medium is operable to facilitate at least substantially unidirectional interaction between the first portions and the first pump signal and between the second portions and the second pump signal to facilitate generation of the plurality of converted wavelength signals.

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58. The system of Claim 57, wherein the optical medium comprises a polarization maintaining fiber.

25 59. The system of Claim 57, further comprising a polarization controller coupled to the optical medium and operable to facilitate directing at least substantially all of the converted wavelength signals from a single output port of the polarization beam splitter.

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60. The system of Claim 59, wherein the single
output port comprises the input port that receives the
plurality of input optical signals, and further
comprising a circulator operable to direct the converted
5 wavelength signals from the path of the input optical
signals.

61. The ^{system} multiple wavelength converter of Claim 51, *
wherein a polarization sensitivity of the converter
10 comprises 0.6 decibels or less over a wavelength range of
at least 35 nanometers.

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62. A system operable to convert a plurality of wavelengths, the system comprising:

one or more optical transmitters operable to generate alone or in combination a plurality of optical
5 input signals each comprising a wavelength in a first communications band; and

a multiple wavelength converter coupled to the one or more optical transmitters and operable to approximately simultaneously generate, for each of the
10 plurality of optical input signals, a converted wavelength signal comprising a wavelength in a second communications band.

63. The system of Claim 62, wherein the first
15 communications band comprises the conventional band (C-band) of wavelengths and wherein the second communications band comprises either the short band (S-band) or the long band (L-band) of wavelengths.

64. The system of Claim 62, wherein a cross-talk between the converted wavelength signals comprises less than minus fourteen decibels (-14 dB) over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers or wherein a polarization sensitivity of the converter is less than
20 1.2 decibels over a wavelength range of at least seven
25 (7) nanometers.

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65. The system of Claim 62, wherein the multiple wavelength converter comprises an optical medium operable to receive a pump signal and the plurality of input signals, wherein the pump signal and each of the plurality of input signals are synchronized to overlap at least partially during at least a part of the time spent traversing the optical medium to facilitate generation of the plurality of converted wavelength signals.

10 66. The system of Claim 62, wherein the multiple wavelength converter comprises an optical medium comprising:

15 a first end operable to receive from a polarization beam splitter first portions of a plurality of input optical signals and a first pump signal, each of the first portions and the first pump signal comprising at least substantially a first polarization; and

20 a second end operable to receive second portions of the plurality of input optical signals and a second pump signal, the second portions and the second pump signal comprising at least substantially a second polarization approximately orthogonal to the first polarization;

25 wherein the optical gain medium is operable to facilitate at least substantially unidirectional interaction between the first portions and the first pump signal and between the second portions and the second pump signal to facilitate generation of the plurality of converted wavelength signals.

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67. The system of Claim 62, wherein the optical *ADD*
medium comprises a propagation length selected to result
in a cross talk of minus twenty-seven (-27) decibels or
less in the converted wavelength signals over a
5 wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

68. The system of Claim 62, wherein a polarization
sensitivity of the converter comprises 0.6 decibels or
less over a wavelength range of at least 35 nanometers.

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69. A system operable to convert a plurality of wavelengths to facilitate protection switching, the system comprising:

an optical medium operable to communicate optical
5 signals comprising wavelengths residing in a first set of wavelengths or a second set of wavelengths;

a multiple wavelength converter coupled to the optical medium, the multiple wavelength converter operable to receive a plurality of optical signals each
10 comprising a wavelength in the first set of wavelengths and to approximately simultaneously generate, for each of the plurality of optical signals, a converted wavelength signal comprising a wavelength in the second set of wavelengths;

15 wherein the second set of wavelengths comprises a protection path for the first set of wavelengths operable to be utilized in the event of detection of a fault associated with a communication path carrying optical signals comprising wavelengths from the first set of
20 wavelengths or a fault associated with the optical signals.

70. The system of Claim 69, wherein the optical medium comprises:

25 a first optical medium operable to communicate signals comprising wavelengths in the first set of wavelengths; and

a second optical medium operable to communicate signals comprising wavelengths in the second set of
30 wavelengths.

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71. The system of Claim 70, wherein the first and second optical media comprise physically distinct media from one another.

5 72. The system of Claim 69, wherein the first set of wavelengths resides in the conventional communications band and wherein the second set of wavelengths resides in either the short communications band (S-band) or the long communications band (L-band) of wavelengths.

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73. The system of Claim 69, wherein the wavelength converter is operable to generate the converted wavelength signals in response to a fault detected.

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74. The system of Claim 69, wherein a cross-talk between the converted wavelength signals comprises less than minus fourteen decibels (-14 dB) over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers or wherein a polarization sensitivity of the converter is less than
20 1.2 decibels over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

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75. The system of Claim 69, wherein the multiple wavelength converter comprises an optical medium operable
to receive a pump signal and the plurality of input signals, wherein the pump signal and each of the plurality of input signals are synchronized to overlap at least partially during at least a part of the time spent traversing the optical medium to facilitate generation of
30 the plurality of converted wavelength signals.

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76. The system of Claim 69, wherein the multiple wavelength converter comprises an optical medium comprising:

5 a first end operable to receive from a polarization beam splitter first portions of a plurality of input optical signals and a first pump signal, each of the first portions and the first pump signal comprising at least substantially a first polarization; and

10 a second end operable to receive second portions of the plurality of input optical signals and a second pump signal, the second portions and the second pump signal comprising at least substantially a second polarization approximately orthogonal to the first polarization;

15 wherein the optical gain medium is operable to facilitate at least substantially unidirectional interaction between the first portions and the first pump signal and between the second portions and the second pump signal to facilitate generation of the plurality of converted wavelength signals.

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77. The system of Claim 69, wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length selected to result in a cross talk of minus twenty-seven (-27) decibels or less in the converted wavelength signals over a
25 wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

78. The system of Claim 69, wherein a polarization sensitivity of the converter comprises 0.6 decibels or less over a wavelength range of at least 35 nanometers.

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79. A method of generating a plurality of converted wavelength signals, comprising:

receiving a plurality of optical input signals each comprising at least one distinct wavelength;

5 receiving a pump signal comprising a pump wavelength that is either shorter or longer than each of the wavelengths of the plurality of input optical signals;

copropagating the plurality of input optical signals and the pump signal over a nonlinear optical medium;

10 generating a plurality of converted wavelength signals based on an interaction between the plurality of input optical signals and the pump signal;

wherein a cross-talk between the converted wavelength signals comprises less than minus fourteen
15 decibels (-14 dB) over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers or wherein a polarization sensitivity associated with the converted wavelength signals is less than 1.2 decibels over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

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80. The method of Claim 79, wherein the plurality of input signals comprise signals in a first band of wavelengths and wherein the plurality of converted wavelength signals comprise signals in a second band of
25 wavelengths.

81. The method of Claim 80, wherein the first band comprises the conventional band (C-band) of wavelengths and wherein the second band comprises either the short
30 band (S-band) or the long band (L-band) of wavelengths.

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82. The method of Claim 79, wherein the optical medium comprises a medium operable to facilitate a Chi-3 or effective Chi-3 nonlinear effect.

5 83. The method of Claim 82, wherein the Chi-3 or effective Chi-3 nonlinear effect comprises parametric amplification, modulation instability or four wave mixing.

10 84. The method of Claim 79, wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length selected to result in a conversion efficiency of at least 4.7 decibels and a cross talk of -27 decibels or less in the converted wavelength signals over a wavelength range of at least 30
15 nanometers.

85. The method of Claim 79, wherein receiving a plurality of optical input signals comprises:

20 receiving the plurality of optical input signals at a polarization beam splitter; and

25 separating each of the plurality of optical input signals into a first portion comprising a first polarization and a second portion comprising a second polarization.

86. The method of Claim 85, wherein receiving a pump signal comprises:

30 receiving the pump signal at a polarization beam splitter; and

30 separating the pump signal into a first pump signal comprising a first polarization and a second pump signal comprising a second polarization.

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87. The method of Claim 86, wherein copropagating the plurality of input optical signals and the pump signal over a nonlinear optical medium comprises:

propagating the first portions and the first pump
5 signal in one direction through the optical medium; and

propagating the second portions and the second pump signal in a second direction opposite the first direction through the optical medium.

10 88. The method of Claim 79, wherein a polarization sensitivity associated with the converted wavelengths comprises 0.6 decibels or less over a wavelength range of at least 35 nanometers.

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89. A method of generating a plurality of converted wavelength signals, comprising:

receiving a plurality of optical input signals each comprising at least one distinct wavelength;

5 receiving a pump signal comprising a pump wavelength that is either shorter or longer than each of the wavelengths of the plurality of input optical signals;

copropagating the plurality of input optical signals and the pump signal over a nonlinear optical medium, the
10 nonlinear medium comprising a propagation length;

generating a plurality of converted wavelength signals based on an interaction between the plurality of input optical signals and the pump signal;

wherein the propagation length of the optical medium
15 is selected to result in a conversion efficiency of at least minus sixteen (-16) decibels and a cross talk of minus fourteen (-14) decibels or less in the converted wavelength signals over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

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90. The method of Claim 89, wherein the plurality of input signals comprise signals in a first band of wavelengths and wherein the plurality of converted wavelength signals comprise signals in a second band of
25 wavelengths.

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91. The method of Claim 89, wherein receiving a plurality of optical input signals comprises:

receiving the plurality of optical input signals at a polarization beam splitter; and

5 separating each of the plurality of optical input signals into a first portion comprising a first polarization and a second portion comprising a second polarization.

10 92. The method of Claim 91, wherein receiving a pump signal comprises:

receiving the pump signal at a polarization beam splitter; and

15 separating the pump signal into a first pump signal comprising a first polarization and a second pump signal comprising a second polarization.

20 93. The method of Claim 92, wherein copropagating the plurality of input optical signals and the pump signal over a nonlinear optical medium comprises:

propagating the first portions and the first pump signal in one direction through the optical medium; and

25 propagating the second portions and the second pump signal in a second direction opposite the first direction through the optical medium.

30 94. The method of Claim 89, wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length selected to result in a conversion efficiency of at least 4.7 decibels and a cross talk of -27 decibels or less in the converted wavelength signals over a wavelength range of at least 30 nanometers.

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95. The method of Claim 89, wherein a polarization sensitivity associated with the converted wavelengths comprises 0.6 decibels or less over a wavelength range of at least 35 nanometers.

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96. A method of generating a plurality of converted wavelength signals, comprising:

receiving at a polarization beam splitter a plurality of optical input signals each comprising at
5 least one distinct wavelength;

separating each of the plurality of optical input signals into a first portion comprising a first polarization and a second portion comprising a second polarization;

10 copropagating the first portions and a first pump signal in a first direction along a nonlinear optical medium, wherein an interaction between the first pump signal and the first portions results in generation of first portions of converted wavelength signals;

15 copropagating the second portions and a second pump signal in a second ^{direction} opposite the first direction along the nonlinear optical medium, wherein an interaction between the second pump signal and the second portions results in generation of second portions of converted wavelength
20 signals; and

combining the first and second portions of the converted wavelength signals at the polarization beam splitter to form a plurality of converted wavelength signals.

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97. The method of Claim 96, wherein the plurality of input signals comprise signals in a first band of wavelengths and wherein the plurality of converted wavelength signals comprise signals in a second band of
30 wavelengths.

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98. The method of Claim 96, wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length selected to result in a conversion efficiency of at least minus sixteen (-16) decibels and a cross talk of minus fourteen (-14) decibels or less in the converted wavelength signals over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

99. The method of Claim 96, wherein the optical medium comprises a polarization maintaining fiber.

100. The method of Claim 96, wherein copropagating the first portions and the first pump signal and copropagating the second portions and the second pump signal comprises controlling the polarization of the first and second portions and the first and second pump signals to direct at least substantially all of the converted wavelength signals from a single output port of the polarization beam splitter.

101. The method of Claim 100, wherein the single output port comprises the input port that receives the plurality of input optical signals, and further comprising a redirecting the converted wavelength signals leaving the output port from the path of the input optical signals.

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102. The method of Claim 96, wherein copropagating the first portions and the first pump signal and copropagating the second portions and the second pump signal comprises introducing the first and second pump
5 signals to the optical medium without passing the first and second pump signals through the polarization beam splitter.

103. The method of Claim 96, wherein the first pump
10 signal and the second pump signal comprise approximately orthogonally polarized portions separated from a pump signal generated by a single pump source.

104. The method of Claim 96, wherein the first pump
15 signal and the second pump signal comprise pump signals generated at separate pump sources.

105. The method of Claim 96, wherein a polarization
20 sensitivity associated with the converted wavelengths comprises less than 1.2 decibels or less over a wavelength range of at least 7 nanometers.

106. The method of Claim 96, wherein a polarization
25 sensitivity associated with the converted wavelengths comprises 0.6 decibels or less over a wavelength range of at least 35 nanometers.

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107. A method of generating a plurality of converted wavelength signals, comprising:

receiving a plurality of optical input signals each comprising at least one distinct wavelength residing in a
5 first communications band;

receiving a pump signal comprising a pump wavelength that is either shorter or longer than each of the wavelengths of the plurality of input optical signals;

copropagating the plurality of input optical signals
10 and the pump signal over a nonlinear optical medium;

generating a plurality of converted wavelength signals based on an interaction between the plurality of input optical signals and the pump signal, wherein the plurality of converted wavelength signals reside in a
15 second communications band.

108. The method of Claim 107, wherein a cross-talk between the converted wavelength signals comprises less than minus fourteen decibels (-14 dB) over a wavelength
20 range of at least seven (7) nanometers or wherein a polarization sensitivity associated with the converted wavelength signals is less than 1.2 decibels over a wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

25 109. The method of Claim 107, wherein the first band comprises the conventional band (C-band) of wavelengths and wherein the second band comprises either the short band (S-band) or the long band (L-band) of wavelengths.

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110. The method of Claim 107, wherein receiving a plurality of optical input signals comprises:

receiving the plurality of optical input signals at a polarization beam splitter; and

5 separating each of the plurality of optical input signals into a first portion comprising a first polarization and a second portion comprising a second polarization.

10 111. The method of Claim 110, wherein receiving a pump signal comprises:

receiving the pump signal at a polarization beam splitter; and

15 separating the pump signal into a first pump signal comprising a first polarization and a second pump signal comprising a second polarization.

20 112. The method of Claim 111, wherein copropagating the plurality of input optical signals and the pump signal over a nonlinear optical medium comprises:

propagating the first portions and the first pump signal in one direction through the optical medium; and

25 propagating the second portions and the second pump signal in a second direction opposite the first direction through the optical medium.

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113. The method of Claim 107, wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length selected to result in a conversion efficiency associated with the converted wavelength signals of at least 4.7 decibels and a
5 cross-talk associated with the converted wavelength signals of -27 decibels or less over a wavelength range of at least thirty 30 nanometers.

114. The method of Claim 82, wherein a polarization
10 sensitivity associated with the converted wavelengths comprises less than 0.6 decibels or less over a wavelength range of at least 35 nanometers.

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115. A method of protection switching, comprising:
receiving a plurality of optical input signals each
comprising at least one distinct wavelength residing in a
first set of wavelengths associated with a first
5 communication path;
receiving a pump signal comprising a pump wavelength
that is either shorter or longer than each of the
wavelengths of the plurality of input optical signals;
detecting a fault associated with the first
10 communication path;
copropagating the plurality of input optical signals
and the pump signal over a nonlinear optical medium;
generating a plurality of converted wavelength
signals based on an interaction between the plurality of
15 input optical signals and the pump signal, wherein the
plurality of converted wavelength signals reside in a
second set of wavelengths associated with a second
communication path; and
in response to detecting the fault, communicating
20 the plurality of converted wavelength signals over the
second communications path.

116. The method of Claim 115, wherein a cross-talk
between the converted wavelength signals comprises less
25 than minus fourteen decibels (-14 dB) over a wavelength
range of at least seven (7) nanometers or wherein a
polarization sensitivity associated with the converted
wavelength signals is less than 1.2 decibels over a
wavelength range of at least seven (7) nanometers.

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117. The method of Claim 115, wherein the first ^{set} band comprises the conventional band (C-band) of wavelengths and wherein the second ^{set} band comprises either the short band (S-band) or the long band (L-band) of wavelengths.

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118. The method of Claim 115, wherein receiving a plurality of optical input signals comprises:

receiving the plurality of optical input signals at a polarization beam splitter; and

10 separating each of the plurality of optical input signals into a first portion comprising a first polarization and a second portion comprising a second polarization.

119. The method of Claim 118, wherein receiving a pump signal comprises:

receiving the pump signal at a polarization beam splitter; and

20 separating the pump signal into a first pump signal comprising a first polarization and a second pump signal comprising a second polarization.

120. The method of Claim 119, wherein copropagating the plurality of input optical signals and the pump signal over a nonlinear optical medium comprises:

25 propagating the first portions and the first pump signal in one direction through the optical medium; and

30 propagating the second portions and the second pump signal in a second direction opposite the first direction through the optical medium.

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121. The method of Claim 115, wherein the optical medium comprises a propagation length selected to result in a conversion efficiency associated with the converted wavelength signals of at least 4.7 decibels and a cross-talk associated with the converted wavelength signals of minus twenty-seven (-27) decibels or less over a wavelength range of at least thirty (30) nanometers.

122. The method of Claim 115, wherein a polarization sensitivity associated with the converted wavelengths comprises less than 0.6 decibels or less over a wavelength range of at least 35 nanometers.

123. The method of Claim 115, wherein generating the plurality of converted wavelength signals comprises generating the plurality of converted wavelength signals after a fault has been detected.

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